social welfare activities, like setting up of technical institutions, hospitals, labour intensive commercial activities, etc;

(e) if so, the details in this regard; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO) : (a) The Corpus of the Employees' Provident Fund, as on 31.3.2005 was Rs. 79,764.48 crore.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The question does not arise in view of (b) above.

(d) to (f) As per the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, the employers and the employees contribute at a rate of 12% each of the basic wages of the employees. Out of 12% of employers' contribution, 8.33% is diverted to the Pension Fund for providing pensionary benefits to the subscribers and their families and the balance 15.67% is deposited in the Provident Fund. The amount outstanding at the credit of the members' account cannot be diverted for any other purpose. Therefore, it is not possible to divert a portion of the Fund for any social welfare activities.

Telephone booths at ration shops

*75. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to establish telephone booths at public distribution shops (ration shops);

(b) if so, whether the proposal has been accepted by the State Governments;

(c) if so, the details including the number of such booths proposed to be set up, State-wise and category-wise as on today; and

(d) if so, the State Governments which have accepted the above proposal as on date?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI DAYANIDHI MARAN) : (a) Sir, there is no specific proposal from Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)/Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) to establish telephone booths at public distribution shops (ration shops). However, the PCOs are allotted, subject to technical feasibility, to all applicants who are of 18 years of age or above without any restrictions of educational qualifications, employment etc., which also includes public distribution shop owners.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Plans to meet future coal demand

*76. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has not formulated any plan to meet future coal demand;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to ensure availability of adequate quantity of coal to core sectors like power generation, steel, aluminium and infrastructure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply given to part (a) above.

(c) The following steps have been taken to ensure adequate availability of coal:

(i) Coal India Limited has been asked to increase production from existing mines and expedite production from new projects.

(ii) 136 Coal mine blocks have been identified for allocation for captive mining. Out of these, 86 coal blocks have been allotted to different consumers and more are under process.

(iii) State and Central Government companies are being allotted coal mining blocks without restriction of captive mining.